



MONTHLY SEPTEMBER 2005 UPDATE

◆ Event highlights need for employment options for people with disabilities

Salisbury, Maryland might seem an unlikely place for three Cabinet Secretaries to join forces to promote the need for more job opportunities for people with disabilities. But the Salisbury site—**K&L Microwave**—proved an exemplary backdrop due to the company's ongoing commitment to hiring individuals with disabilities.

"In Maryland, like many other states, we have an incredibly high unemployment rate for individuals with disabilities," commented **Secretary Kristen Cox** of the Maryland Department of Disabilities. "Companies like **K&L Microwave** are the model. We hope other Maryland businesses step up and provide opportunities to people with disabilities so they can prove they can do the job."

Secretary Cox was joined by **Secretary Aris Melissaratos** of the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development and **Secretary James D. Fielder, Jr., Ph.D.**, of the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation, along with other leaders from state government and non-profit agencies. During the August 17 event, agency heads and guests toured the plant and observed K&L employees successfully working in competitive, integrated jobs.

K&L employee **Louis Gentile**, who measures ceramic resonators at the plant, demonstrated how his obsessive attention to detail makes him the perfect employee for a job where the margin of error is two-thousandths of an inch.

"Our company focuses on the individual's abilities and looks for a position that will be a good match," said **Robin Hall**, Human Resource Manager at K&L Microwave, a Dover Company. "We've had a lot of success approaching hiring this way — concentrating on what people can do, not what they can't do."

(continued on back)



◆ Empowering People ◆

Governor's Workforce Housing Conference

This year's Governor's Workforce Housing Conference will be held on Tuesday, Oct. 18, from 8 a.m. to 5:15 p.m. at the Baltimore Convention Center. The **Commitment to Excellence Awards Luncheon** at noon features a presentation by **Governor Robert L. Ehrlich**, who will be joined by Fannie Mae Executive Vice President **Kenneth J. Bacon** and **Secretary Victor L. Hoskins** of the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development.

Sessions presented throughout the day include: "Creative Solutions for Special Needs Populations," with MDOD **Secretary Kristen Cox** serving as moderator; "Leveraging Public Investment through Equity Funds;" "The Art of the Deal: Innovations in Rental Housing Development;" and "Work Here? Live Where? Maryland's Workforce Housing Challenge."

Cost for the sessions and luncheon is \$35 per person; for the sessions only, no charge. To register or for more information, visit www.mdhousing.org or call 1-800-756-0119.



Save these dates for...

Extraordinary Stories

A Lecture Series Featuring People With Disabilities

Wednesday, October 12, 2005
3:00 – 6:00 p.m.

The American Red Cross Building
4800 Mount Hope Drive, Baltimore

Featuring...

◆ The Honorable Joseph I. Cassilly
State's Attorney for Harford County

◆ Joanne Wilson
Executive Director of Affiliate Actions, NFB

◆ Lucinda Shaw
Internationally-known stained glass artist

with Keynote Speaker

Dr. Margaret Giannini, Director
Office on Disability
U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services



Wednesday, October 19, 2005
3:00 – 6:00 p.m.

Maryland State House
100 State Circle, Annapolis

Featuring...

◆ The Honorable Paul Garvey Goetzke
Circuit Court Judge for Anne Arundel Co.

◆ Champion Swimmer Lucy Gilmore

with Keynote Speaker

Dr. Margaret Giannini, Director
Office on Disability
U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services

**Free admission. To RSVP or for information
call 410-767-3660 voice/tty or email
nbrittingham@mdod.state.md.us.**

◆ Gov. Ehrlich Offers Maryland Relay Services to Katrina Victims

Maryland Relay and its service provider, **AT&T**, have agreed to offer assistance to individuals with communications disabilities in states hit by Hurricane Katrina, where Relay Centers have been destroyed or rendered inoperable due to power outages and structural damage.

Maryland operators will help process calls made to and from Katrina-stricken states that would normally be processed through centers located in Louisiana, Alabama and Mississippi. Users can place calls to the same telephone numbers; however, the calls will be routed through Maryland or other states helping with this effort.

Maryland operators may be handling hundreds of additional calls, so Maryland users are asked to be patient if calls are not answered as quickly as usual. This situation is temporary until Relay Systems in Louisiana, Alabama and Mississippi have been restored.

For more information, visit www.mdrelay.org or call 410-767-6962.

◆ Employment Options *(continued from front)*

Later in the week, **Secretary Cox** and **Secretary S. Anthony McCann** of the **Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene** visited the **Carriage House Restaurant** in Berlin, Maryland, a training satellite of the **Worcester County Developmental Center, Inc.**

Clients of the Developmental Center receive training in the food service industry at the **Carriage House**, which is open for lunch and private parties. Some clients move on to other jobs, while others work regularly at the Carriage House. The goal is to find a good fit for each employee, staff members said.



Photo courtesy of The Daily Times, Salisbury, Md.

K&L Microwave employee Louis Gentile (left) and K&L Focus Factory Manager Fred Moore (right) demonstrate the use of equipment to Secretary Kristen Cox, Maryland Department of Disabilities, and Secretary James D. Fielder, Jr., Ph.D., Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation.